

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A dirt receptacle for a vacuum cleaner, the receptacle comprising:  
a rigid container having an outlet for the emptying of collected dirt,  
a closure for closing the outlet, ~~and~~  
actuator means for moving the closure between a closed position and an open position,  
said actuator means being operable to control the position of the closure between said open and closed positions such that the actuator means can be operated to provide staged dirt discharge by partially opening the closure, to provide a restricted outlet for fine dirt, before fully opening the closure, and  
wherein the outlet is provided at a position on the container which is located at the bottom thereof when the container is in use.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Original) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 1, in which means are provided for retaining the closure in said open and/or closed positions.
4. (Previously presented) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 1, in which the closure is biased into said open and/or closed positions.
5. (Original) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 1, in which the container comprises an open bottom forming the outlet.
6. (Original) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 1, in which the closure comprises a flap pivoted to the container.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously presented) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 1, in which the closure is arranged to locate at a partially opened position.

14. (Currently amended) A vacuum cleaner comprising a dirt receptacle, the dirt receptacle comprising:

a rigid container having an outlet for the emptying of collected dirt,

a closure for closing the outlet, ~~and~~

actuator means for moving the closure between a closed position and an open position, said actuator means being operable to control the position of the closure between said open and closed positions such that the actuator means can be operated to provide staged dirt discharge by partially opening the closure, to provide a restricted outlet for fine dirt, before fully opening the closure, and

wherein the vacuum cleaner comprises a cyclonic separator having a cylindrical-walled chamber.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 14, in which the outlet is provided at a position on the container which is located at the bottom thereof when the container is in use.

17. (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 14, in which means are provided for retaining the closure in said open and/or closed positions.

18. (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 14, in which the closure is biased into said open and/or closed positions.

19. (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 14, in which the container comprises an open bottom forming the outlet.
20. (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 14, in which the closure comprises a flap pivoted to the container.
21. (New) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 14, in which the closure is arranged to locate at a partially opened position.
22. (New) A dirt receptacle for a vacuum cleaner, the receptacle comprising:  
a rigid container having an outlet for the emptying of collected dirt,  
a closure for closing the outlet,  
actuator means for moving the closure between a closed position and an open position,  
said actuator means being operable to control the position of the closure between said open and closed positions such that the actuator means can be operated to provide staged dirt discharge by partially opening the closure, to provide a restricted outlet for fine dirt, before fully opening the closure, and  
wherein the closure is arranged to locate at a partially opened position.
23. (New) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 22, in which the outlet is provided at a position on the container which is located at the bottom thereof when the container is in use.
24. (New) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 22, in which means are provided for retaining the closure in said open and/or closed positions.
25. (New) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 22, in which the closure is biased into said open and/or closed positions.
26. (New) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 22, in which the container comprises an open bottom forming the outlet.

27. (New) A dirt receptacle as claimed in claim 22, in which the closure comprises a flap pivoted to the container.

28. (New) A dirt receptacle for a vacuum cleaner, the receptacle comprising:

a rigid container having an outlet for the emptying of collected dirt,

a closure for closing the outlet,

actuator means for moving the closure between a closed position and an open position,

said actuator means being operable to control the position of the closure between said open and closed positions such that the actuator means can be operated to provide staged dirt discharge by partially opening the closure, to provide a restricted outlet for fine dirt, before fully opening the closure, and the closure comprises a flap pivoted to the container.